

## Wilson Fights for Ohio Company

WASHINGTON, DC – Today Congressman Charlie Wilson (OH-6) led a group of his Ohio colleagues in sending a letter to Secretary of the Army John McHugh regarding a school construction project recently awarded by the U.S. Army. The Army accepted a bid from Feldhaus, a German company, without allowing Summitville Tiles, a 100-year-old ceramic tile and brick company located in Summitville, OH, to submit a bid for the same project.

“I think it is fair to ask the Army to explain why they chose a foreign vendor over an equally qualified Ohio vendor,” Wilson said. “Every time American companies are overlooked, we put local jobs and communities at risk. I strongly believe that we have to stand up for all of our Ohio companies.”

A copy of the letter is below:

---

November 24, 2009  
The Honorable John McHugh  
Secretary of the Army  
Office of the Secretary  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301 - 1400

As Members of the Ohio Delegation, we are writing to inquire about the recent decision to use foreign-made construction products in the Fort Bragg AFB Elementary School Project. We request an explanation of the United States Army's decision to overlook a domestic manufacturer and the failure to support the American economy.

We understand that there were two thin-brick product vendors qualified and approved for usage at the new school project at Fort Bragg; Summitville Tiles based in Summitville, Ohio and the German-owned Feldhaus. On November 12, 2009, Summitville Tiles was informed that the Army selected Feldhaus for the \$250,000 contract. Apparently, this decision was made before the competition was completed and prevented Summitville Tiles from the opportunity to submit its bid for the contract. We are concerned that this U.S. company was intentionally excluded from the bidding process by giving a sole source contract, being supported by American tax dollars, to a foreign company.

Summitville Tiles is a 100-year-old ceramic tile and brick manufacturing company that has a proud history in our state. Though it has been successful for many years, it has not been immune to the recent financial crisis and we feel it is our responsibility to support domestic companies whenever possible. Every time an American construction contract goes overseas, local jobs and communities are at risk.

We are deeply disappointed by the Army's decision to grant this contract to a German company without ample consideration of an American vendor with a high-quality product. We are also curious about the decision to award contract without full and open competition in which multiple vendors are qualified. We encourage the Army to reconsider its decision on this particular contract and re-open the bidding process for more robust competition. In the future, we encourage the Army to make more substantive efforts to support American companies.

Thank you in advance for the time and attention you will give this matter. We look forward to your response.